



# **John Reich Journal**

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# JRCS

JOHN REICH COLLECTORS SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 135 Harrison, OH 45030

The purpose of the John Reich Collectors Society (JRCS) is to encourage the study of numismatics, particularly United States gold and silver coins minted before the introduction of the Seated Liberty design, and to provide technical and educational information concerning such coins.

Annual dues .....\$25.00  
Life Membership .....\$625.00

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The John Reich Journal is the official publication of the Society and is distributed to all members in good standing. Members are encouraged to submit any articles encouraging the study of numismatics and / or relating to early United States gold and silver coins to the editors. Especially needed are articles containing new information about die marriages, die states of published die marriages, attribution methods, collections, collectors, etc.

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Cover Photos: Newly Discovered 1825 0118 Capped Bust Half Dollar, third known.  
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# John Reich Journal

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## Editor's Comments

Happy Holidays to everyone! This issue of the journal has been delayed due to a problem we had with the dime census. A fatal error cost us the complete file and there was no backup. I know, backup, backup, backup....Therefore I need to **solicit new dime census information** from all the collectors expecting to see the information in this issue. We will be putting together the updated information and presenting it in the next issue. I would like to get the next issue out in early February. That would make the deadline for having the new dime census information to me by **January 10**. Please forward your information to me at [jrcs19@roadrunner.com](mailto:jrcs19@roadrunner.com) or to the club post office box (JRCS PO Box 135, Harrison, OH 45030). These are the only two places to send your information. The publication of the census information provided by the membership is one of the most important and valuable services provided by the club. Please send a list of your dimes including duplicates for inclusion in the next issue.

Springtime and the annual EAC/JRCS convention is only a short couple of months away. It is not too early to start planning your trip to Cincinnati. We will be hosting a golf outing on Thursday morning April 16. If you are interested in playing we will be going to Traditions Golf Club which is about a 10 minute trip from the Drawbridge. The cost of 18 holes, cart, and a grill out lunch will be \$100. Those who need to rent clubs will have to have reservations for them to me by April 5th; the additional cost will be \$25. Traditions is one of the best golf courses in the Greater Cincinnati area. I am an average golfer and usually shoot in the high 90's. There will be no penalty if we can not play due to weather conditions. Please let me know if you are thinking about attending the outing so that I can make plans for the food. More information will be forwarded through JR News as the event approaches.

Later that evening there will be a reception at the convention center for attendees to meet one another. Donations are being solicited from the members of EAC and JRCS to offset the cost of the reception. Members wishing to make a donation should make out their checks to EAC Convention 2009 and mail them to me at the club PO Box. If anyone would like information on the hotel accommodations or a bourse application, I will be happy to provide one upon request. If you are planning on purchasing a bourse table you will have to be a member of EAC for insurance purposes.

After the reception, the happening rooms will open for viewing. There will be separate rooms for viewing Colonials, Half Cents, Large Cents, and JRCS coins. In these rooms collectors are encouraged to bring specific die marriages for study. The coins are displayed on tables monitored by volunteers. Attendees will be able to go

room to room to view the coins on display. The JRCS happening room will display the following coins; 1832 LM10 half dime, 1834 JR6 dime, 1818 B9 quarter

and 1807 O111 and O127 half dollars. Most of these die marriages have interesting terminal die states and the O127 half dollar is a difficult R5. Members attending the convention are encouraged to bring their coins of these die marriages with them for display. If any JRCS members who will not be attending would like to have their coins represent them, I will work out the details with you. The happening rooms are one of the highlights of the convention.

The convention bourse will open on Friday morning at 8AM to bourse table dealers and exhibitors. The public will be admitted at 9AM and the bourse will close at 5:30PM. There will be educational seminars offered from 9AM to 5PM. An educational forum will begin at 8PM. The Saturday schedule closely mirrors Friday's except for the bourse closing at 5PM. The annual EAC sale of copper coins will commence at 7:30PM. You must be a member of EAC to participate in the auction. Lot viewing for the sale will be during the bourse hours. On Sunday, the annual membership meeting will begin at 9AM and the bourse will open at the conclusion and will close at 2PM. Cincinnati has always been one of the best locations for the annual EAC show. There will be many great opportunities to learn about the coins we collect, meet other collectors and dealers who share our interests and yes, even purchase a few things for our collections. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

We would like to offer our congratulations to Louis Scuderi as the latest winner of the Jules Reiver Literary Award for his submission **Robert Duphorne and the "Other" Bust Quarter Book**. It was voted the favorite article that was presented in volume 18 of the Journal by a vote of the membership. Secretary Crain reported that Louis' article was followed by Bill Nyberg's article **John Reich's Hidden Initials** and Steve Herrman's **R4-R8 Capped Bust Half Dollar Census** in the voting. He also noted that every article received at least one vote in the balloting. I would like to encourage the membership to submit an article for publication to become eligible for next year's voting.

The JRCS has also decided to begin a Hall of Fame. The Liberty Seated Collectors Club began one this year inducting JRCS member and officer John McCloskey and Kam Awash as their inaugural class. We are following their lead in recognizing the accomplishments and dedication of some of our members to numismatics. John McCloskey, Louis Scuderi and I have been appointed as the committee to determine the selection process. We plan on admitting our first inductees next year.



Anyone not familiar with the new counterfeits coming out of China are encouraged to go to CoinWorld's website ([www.coinworld.com](http://www.coinworld.com)) and review the two part article about these new deceptive fakes. This may be one of the most important reports you will read in the near future. The counterfeiters are becoming quite sophisticated in mass producing replicas of our early coinages including errors. The day may come where it will be extremely difficult to tell real from counterfeit. I encourage everyone to take a few minutes to look up the articles and read them. The only way to combat these fakes is through education.

Where will this new development take us? Will the hobby survive the influx of well executed counterfeits of the antiques we collect? As the counterfeiter gets better at his deception, will we as collectors be able to counteract his actions? The hobby has survived the onslaught of fake items in the past. The early 1960's saw an influx of counterfeit gold coins from the Middle East. In time, they were identified and collectors educated so that it is relatively easy to recognize them today. How much time will it take for us to identify these new fakes for what they are? Only through the efforts of each of us- collectors, dealers, reporters and researchers will we be successful. We must coordinate our efforts to make it difficult for the community to be duped by the efforts of these counterfeiters. The future of our hobby may be at risk.

**Notice: Bust Dime Census Information is  
Solicited for inclusion in the next issue  
of the John Reich Journal.**

**Please email your complete inventory listing (including  
duplicates and die states) /or any questions, to**

**[bkaroleff@yahoo.com](mailto:bkaroleff@yahoo.com)**

**or hard copies to Brad at  
PO Box 135, Harrison, OH 45030.**



**Letters To The Editor:**

**2008 JRCS Jules Reiver Literary Award**

Ladies & Gentlemen:

After carefully counting all of the ballots for the 2008 JRCS Jules Reiver Literary Award, the top three articles are as follows:

- 1. Robert Duphorne and the “Other” Bust Quarter Book, Louis Scuderi - 53 votes**
- 2. John Reich’s Hidden Initials, Bill Nyberg - 50 votes**
- 3. R4 to R8 Capped Bust Half Dollar Census, Stephen J. Herman - 38 votes**

Louis has been presented with a plaque from JRCS commentating his achievement.

It is worthy of mention that every article received at least one vote.

I have all of the ballots here, along with my tally sheet (which I have triple checked for accuracy) in case anyone wants to double check my figures.

You may wish to submit something for publication to be eligible for next year’s award voting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen A. Crain  
*Secretary - JRCS*

**JRCS Update**

The next issue of the John Reich Journal should be mailed to current members in early December 2008.

If your name is listed below, or if someone is in contact with either of these JRCS Members, JRCS needs a current mailing address in order to receive the next issue. I can be contacted at [wdperki@attglobal.net](mailto:wdperki@attglobal.net) .

David Stone, Jr.  
Thomas J. Powell

Thanks.

W. David Perkins,  
*Treasurer - JRCS*



# **Die Sinking and Bulges on 1814 JR-2 and JR-3 Bust Dimes**

**Louis Scuderi | Richard Meaney |** Photography by Rich Sayre

The 1814 JR-2 and JR-3 Capped Bust Dime die marriages present an interesting case study in diesinking that resulted in bulges and other effects on minted coins. In “Die Bulges on Early Capped Bust Dimes,” John McCloskey (1992) wrote “a rather unusual problem showed up in the Bust Dime series in 1814 when many of the dies failed through metal fatigue.” Unfortunately, mint records would be of little use when attempting to determine the cause of the die failures. As Christopher Pilliod points out in “History of Diemaking in the United States,” (2006) “there are virtually no documents or records detailing information vital to the diemaking process, from the procurement of the raw steel to the mechanics of manufacturing. As a result, any research efforts must be focused on the study of coinage itself.”

We have examined ten circulated examples of the 1814 JR-2 die marriage as well as additional specimens of the 1814 JR-3 variety which shares an obverse with the 1814 JR-2 in order to better describe the effects of die sinking than one may learn in Early United States Dimes 1796-1837 (Davis et al., 1984) (hereafter *EUSD*).

The authors of *EUSD* describe the reverse die defects found on the 1814 JR-2 as:

“Bulge develops through the letters ERICA. Another develops through the olive leaves and the tip of the left wing.”

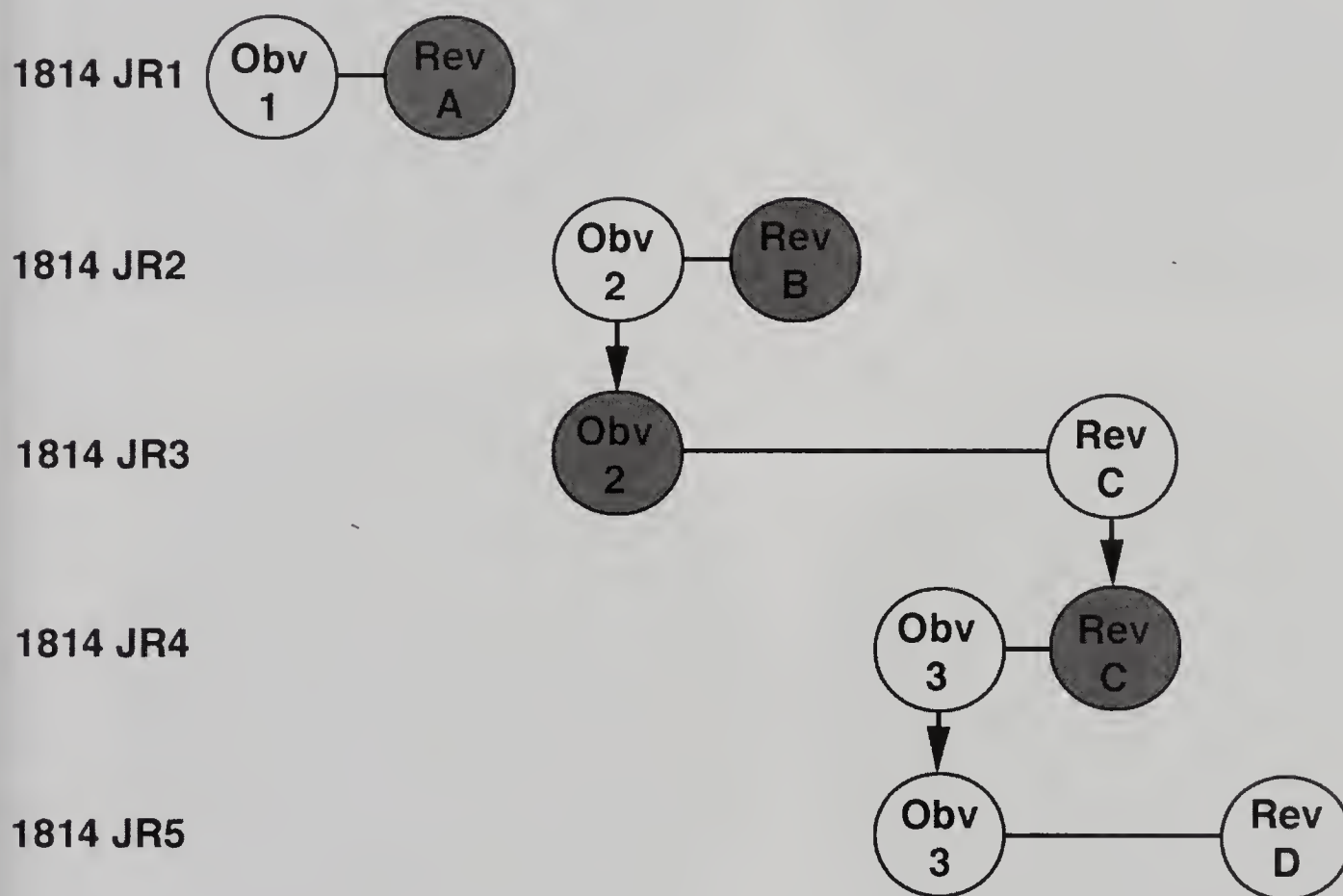
McCloskey (2003) in a follow up article on die bulges, expands on this and notes that: “Late die states show multiple reverse clash marks and two reverse bulges. The first bulge runs from the rim through the letters ERICA and is so strong that these letters are completely missing on even high grade examples. In fact the depression on the reverse die is so extensive that the 10th and 11th obverse stars are completely missing due to a lack of pressure in that area while the coin was being struck. A second bulge runs through the olive leaves, the tip of the left wing and the letter U. At this stage even high grade examples will have no dentils from the middle leaf to the letter U.”

We have found additional obverse and reverse bulges on later state specimens of the 1814 JR-2 and document those advanced defects here in order to illustrate the deterioration of both dies. Our paper will conclude with a summary of these bulges on the die linked 1814 JR-2 and JR-3 dimes and use this information to speculate on how these weaknesses developed.



Die usage in 1814:

The 1814 dimes were coined from three different obverse dies and four different reverse dies as shown in *figure 1*. All except JR-5 show some evidence of die bulging. McCloskey (2003) notes that this was a common problem on early large sized dimes and suggests that, as the early dies experienced continued use, metal fatigue produced die buckling and surface collapse resulting in a reduction of pressure in the depressed areas. This in turn produced weakly or even incompletely struck areas on late die state coins.



**Figure 1.** *Die marriages of 1814 obverse and reverse dies. Darkened circles indicate dies with bulges as noted in Early US Dimes.*

Davis et al. (1984) notes that the 1814 JR-2 obverse is characterized by a strong obverse strike and a strong reverse but with weakness at the dentils above STATES OF. In its early die state the obverse and reverse are sharply struck however, many but not all, of the early die state coins we have observed have significant die rotations. This produces a “floating” reverse die weakness directly opposite the top of the obverse. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate early die state coins with different rotations (235 and 140 degrees respectively) and reverse weakness in the dentils and lettering directly opposite the top of the obverse. Both coins are shown in normal coin rotation with the bottom of the reverse image directly opposite the top of the obverse. In both cases these early die state coins have significant weakness on the reverse periphery directly opposite the top of the cap and significant weakness in the reverse design directly opposite the cap.



Figure 2. 1814 JR2. Early die state. Die rotation of ~235 degrees (measured clockwise)



Figure 3. 1814 JR2. Early die state. Die rotation of ~140 degrees (measured clockwise)

At some point in the life of this marriage, the freely rotating reverse die was fixed with respect to the obverse and most mid to late die state 1814 JR-2's have a normal obverse to reverse relationship. The mid die state coins begin, as noted in EUSD, to exhibit a set of reverse die bulges with the largest being at ERICA. This bulge becomes so severe that there is insufficient pressure to strike up obverse star 10 followed by weakness in the lower part of star 9 and the upper part of star 11. A second bulge begins almost simultaneously at the olive leaves and extends to the tip of the left wing. Most specimens of this die state are found in lower grade and show a marked weakness in all three stars (*Fig. 4a*). However, higher grade specimens (*Fig. 4b*) show that most of the perceived weakness is due to wear.





Figure 4. a) 1814 JR-2 obverse. Mid-to-late die state. Worn specimen.



Figure 4. b) Higher grade late die state with more details on stars 9 and 11 (Ex-Reiver)

The reverse of the mid to late die state coins quickly deteriorates and additional bulges, beyond those listed in EUSD, appear. The strongest extends from the period below C2 and through the arrowheads and extends to the bottom of A3. A weaker bulge extends from the T in United to the first S in States. A final bulge develops between the E in States down through the scroll at U and slightly into the field above the eagle's neck and then back to the rim between O and F. The die bulges noted in EUSD also expand with the ERICA bulge expanding first through M and then to A2, and the olive leave bulge expanding through the left wing and to the U and almost to the N in United. This die state is well illustrated in *Figure 5*.



Figure 5. 1814 JR-2 reverse. Late die state showing all bulges.



EUSD and McCloskey (1992, 2003) both note that no bulges appear on the obverse of 1814 JR-2 and that further deterioration of the obverse die occurred during the 1814 JR-3 marriage which uses Obverse 2 and Reverse C. Weakness and die bulges at S1 and S2 and another at S8 to the top of the cap (Figure 6a) expanded during production of this marriage resulting in the eventual failure of the obverse die. However, we have found a very late die state JR-2 that exhibits the beginnings of a bulge at S1 that suggests that both dies were failing simultaneously. This bulge is weakly visible in figure 4b and is better seen in Figure 6b extending from the rim below S1 and the bust through the inner tips of S1 through the field just inside of the inner tip of S2 and finally to the rim just touching the lower outer point of S3.



Figure 6. a) 1814 JR-3 (Obverse 2 late).



Figure 6. b) 1814 JR-2 very-late die state showing weak bulge at S1 and S2.

The marriage of obverse 3 and reverse C then was used to produce 1814 JR-4. This marriage failed when two reverse die bulges developed at ICA and UN.

### Some Thoughts

Of the five die marriages found in 1814 (using three obverse and four reverse dies), four dies exhibit fairly sizeable bulges that probably contributed to their eventual failure. The fifth, 1814 JR-5 did not fail, but the first 1820 obverse die (Obverse 1) when married to the 1814 (Reverse D- STATESOFAMERICA) did fail. Ten of the 13 marriages from 1820 also show bulges and many dies used as early as 1811 and as late as 1825 show some degree of bulging. McCloskey (2003) suggested that metal fatigue underlies these die failures.

No other obverse or reverse die in the bust dime series shows as many bulges as 1814 reverse B and our very late die state examples are probably the terminal die state for this die. From the evidence seen in other die bulged coins of the era it appears unlikely that any die was used as long or failed as completely by bulging as the 1814 reverse B die. As such, we have in the 1814 reverse B an example of how a die under extreme conditions deteriorates.

The five bulges on the reverse of the 1814 JR-2 dime are spaced approximately 70 degrees apart with relatively unbulged portions of the die 180 degrees opposite of the five bulges. A review of McCloskey's (2003) list of reverse die bulges and examination of specimens of these varieties in our possession shows that the locations of die bulges in early die reverses are fairly consistent over approximately 15 years of coin production with no bulges seen at the ST in States, F A in oF America, and only one weak occurrence at the denomination (1825 JR2). Obverse bulges over this same time period occur primarily at Stars 1-3, over the back of the cap and between Star 13 and the date. These positions are approximately 120 degrees apart and are in areas where the design comes closest to the edge of the die. The consistent positioning of die bulges on both obverse and reverse dies of this period suggests that the failure of the dies, while generally related to metal fatigue, may specifically be related to die characteristics which cause initial points of stress concentration followed by warping of the die surface in response to the rotational motion of the hammer die. Over time plastic deformation of the die surface at these stress points characterized by a strain hardening region and a necking region, lead to die sinking/settling (necking expansion, Lin et al., 2006) and produced the die bulges that we see on early dimes.

#### References:

- Davis, David J., Logan, Russell J., Lovejoy, Allen F., McCloskey, John W., Subjack, William J., Early United States Dimes 1796-1837 John Reich Collectors Society, Ypsilanti, MI 1984.
- McCloskey, John W., *Die Bulges on Early Capped Bust Dimes*, John Reich Journal #17, Volume 06/3, July 1992.
- McCloskey, John W., *Bulges on Early Capped Bust Dimes*, John Reich Journal #45, Volume 15/2, July 2003.
- Pilliod, Christopher, History of Diemaking in the United States, ANA Journal #1, Volume 1, Spring 2006.
- Lin, Wilson, Lev, Ming-Sheng, Lin, Chung-Kwel, Su, Cherng-Yuh, 2006. The failure mechanism of diamond like coatings prepared by the filtered cathodic arc technique for minting application. *Surface and Coatings Technology*. 2001 (7), 4430-4435.





# Mint Errors to Establish Hammer and Anvil Die Settings for Flowing Hair Half Dollars

**Henry R. Hilgard**

In 1986 Chris Pilliod published a remarkable paper in which he showed how mint errors can be used to determine which die (obverse or reverse) was used in which position (hammer or anvil) during the striking of coins<sup>1</sup>. He was able to establish with a high degree of certainty the usual hammer and anvil die settings for many series of United States coins, from half cents through double eagles. However, the die settings for the earliest U. S. silver coins, the flowing hair pieces of 1794-1795, were not included in his study, presumably because insufficient data was available. In this study we look at 2 mint errors of 1795 half dollars, one a brockage and one an indent, and find that their characteristics indicate that the reverse die was the hammer die for these pieces.

## Brockage of reverse N of 1795

A brockage is a coin that is struck by a die on one side, and by a coin on the other side.

In addition to having

a normal side, it will

have a side that exhibits

incused, reversed details

from the coin that it

was struck against. A

brockage happens when

the planchet that will

become the brockage

is fed into the coining

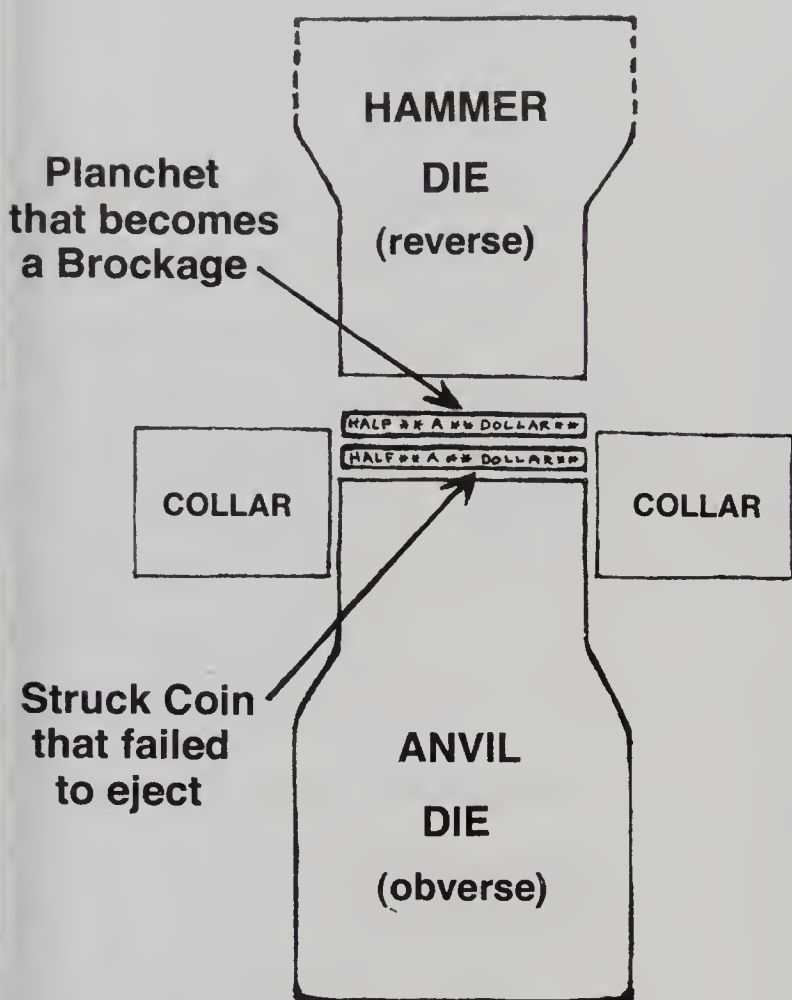
chamber and lands on top

of a struck coin that has not been ejected from the collar. Because this brockage coin has 2 reverses (*Figure 1*), it is clear that as a planchet it landed on the reverse of a struck coin that had failed to eject from the collar, and it was then hit by a hammer die that was a reverse die (*Figure 2*).



*Figure 1. Brockage of Reverse N of 1795*





For this particular brockage, we cannot be sure that it was struck while it was mated to a 1795 obverse, because reverse N of 1795 is also reverse B of 1794. However, it probably spent only a short time married to cracked obverse 1 of 1794 to produce the 1794 O-102, whereas it took up the entire lifetimes of 3 different 1795 obverse dies to make O-117, O-120 and O-121 before it in turn cracked up after marrying yet again to produce the 1795 O-122.

### Indent on reverse of a 1795 O-105

This 1795 O-105 half dollar shows an indent at 12 o'clock on the reverse (Figure 3).

Indents occur when an object comes between

a planchet and a die during striking. In this case we can tell that the object causing the indent was a half dollar because we see raised stars inside the indent (Figure 4). These raised stars were created from the impression of the sunken stars on the edge of the indenting coin.

The arc of the indent shows

that the indenting coin was at a considerable angle

to the planchet during striking, which could have

happened only if the coin causing the indent was on

the hammer die side during striking (Figure 5). So for

this indented 1795 O-105, the reverse was the hammer

die.



*Figure 3. Indent on Reverse of 1795 O-105*

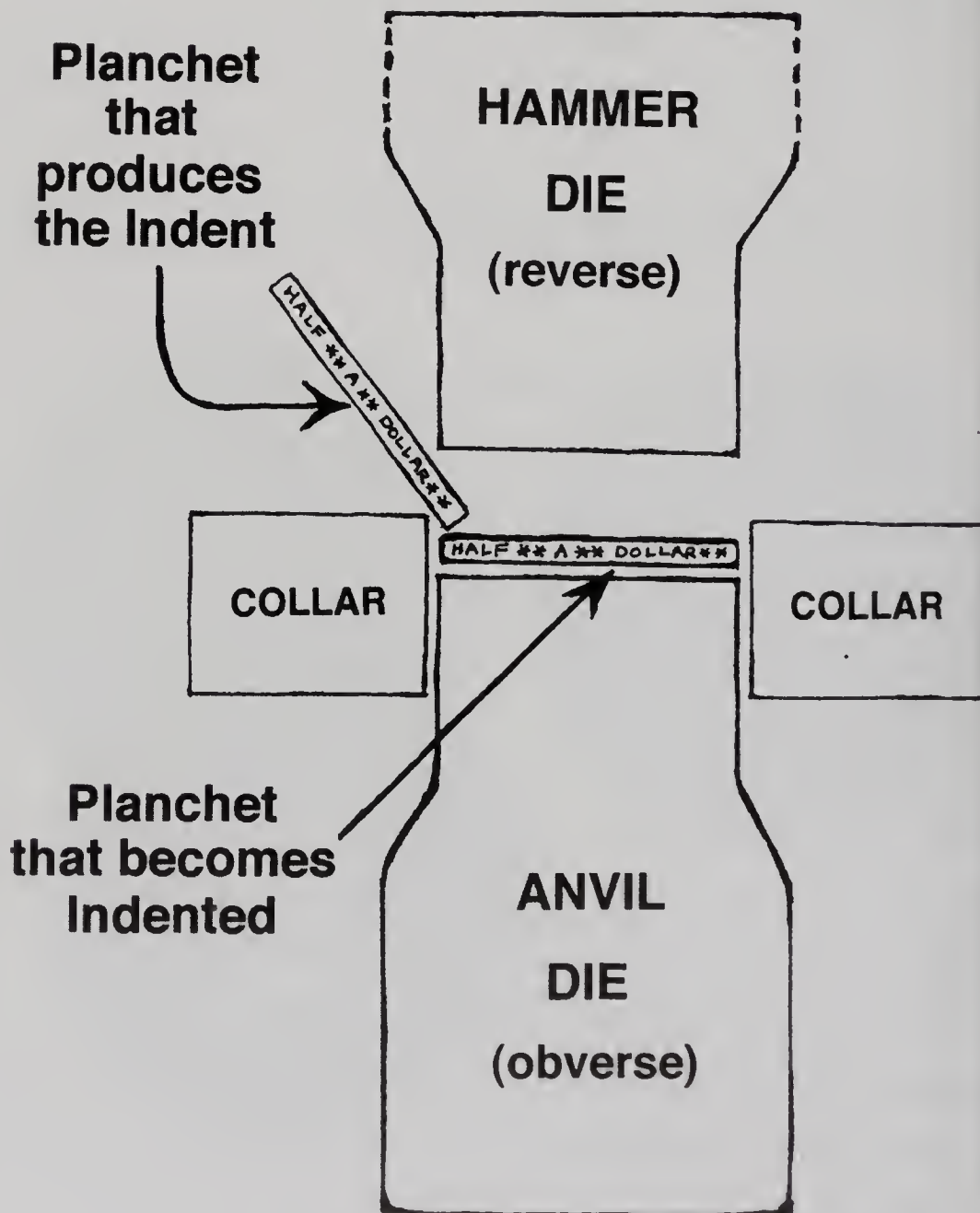


**Figure 4.** *Inside the Indent*

## Discussion

In addition to brockages and indents, other kinds of mint errors, for example cuds, are useful in establishing die settings. There are two types of cuds: full and retained. A full cud occurs when a piece of die breaks off and falls out, resulting in an unstruck area on the coin that is struck by the die. A retained cud occurs when a piece of the die breaks

off but does not fall away, resulting in an area on the coin that will still retain some design features. Full cuds are generally associated with the hammer die, and retained cuds generally with the anvil die<sup>2</sup>. This is logical because one would expect a broken piece of die to fall away easily from a die in the hammer position, whereas a broken piece of die could be held in place by the collar apparatus that surrounds an anvil die. In the flowing half dollar series, the well known full cud on the 1795 O-103a is found on the reverse, and the retained cud on the 1795 O-110a is found on the obverse (Figure 6). Following the above logic, these varieties are consistent with the reverse being the hammer die and the obverse the anvil die.



**Figure 5.** *Coining an Indent on the Reverse*



It would also be instructive to study off center pieces, because during an off center striking the collar may serve as a fulcrum causing the planchet to bend upwards towards the hammer die. A 35% off center 1795 O-110 is known<sup>3</sup>, but I have been unable to locate it. In any case, an analysis of additional pieces will be necessary in order to determine if the die settings reported here are the rule for the many marriages of flowing hair half dollars.



*Figure 6. Retained Cud on 1795 O-110a*

## References:

1. Pilliod, Chris, What Error Coins Can Teach Us about Die Settings, *The Numismatist*, Vol. 109, No. 4, April 1996, pp. 401-408.
2. Ibid, pp. 404-405.
3. Peters, Jess, The Pollard-Peters Collection of Mint Errors - A Pictorial Review, privately issued ca. 1987.

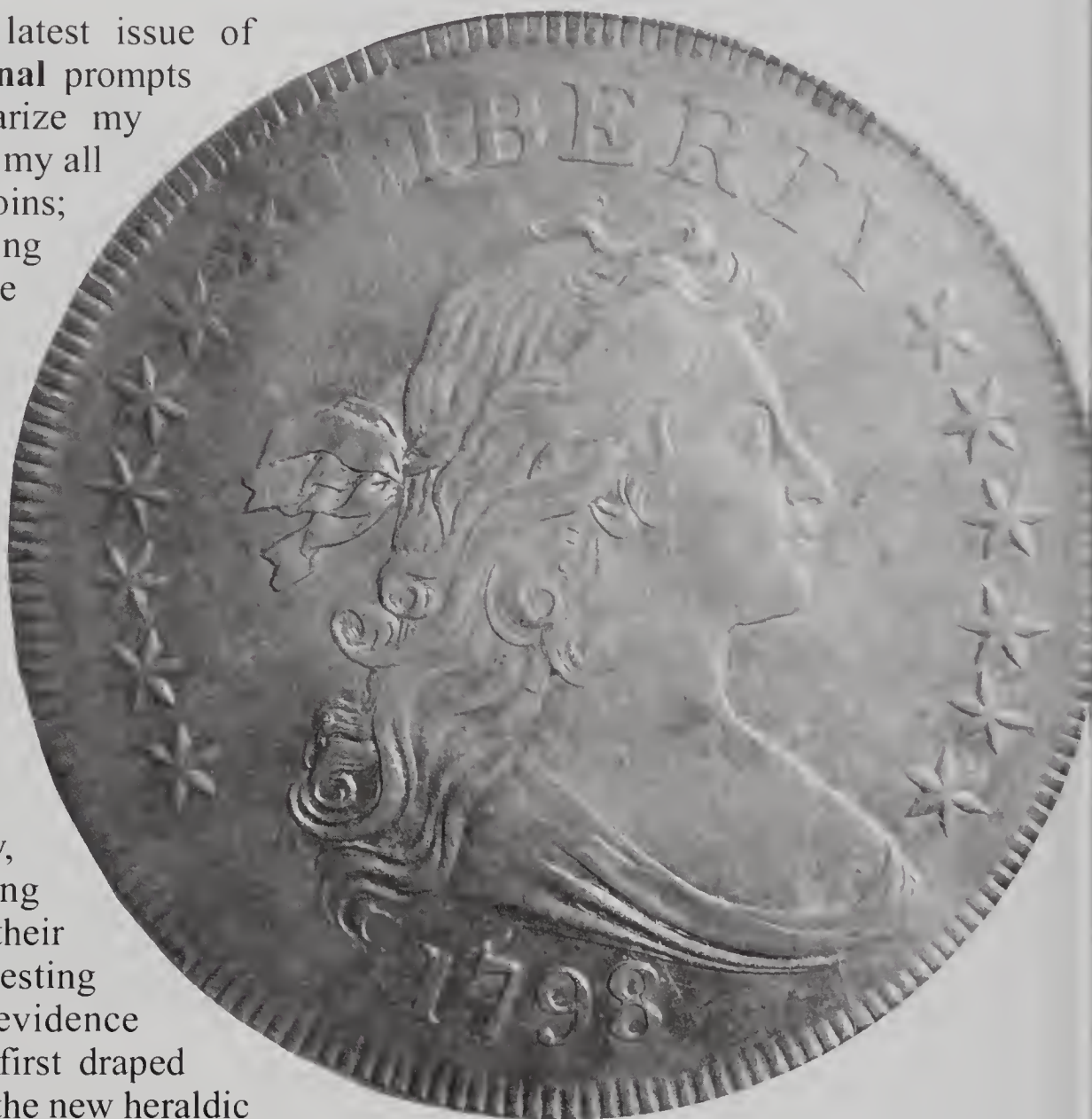




# Mister Bolenders Number Thirty Two

**Nathan Markowitz**

Perhaps reading the latest issue of the **John Reich Journal** prompts me to finally summarize my observations on one of my all time favorite early coins; the rare and fascinating 1798 B32 dollar. Since I became reacquainted with collecting and attracted to bust coinage I was enamored by broken dies and B32 while dramatic is also subtle in its failure. I have endeavored over several years to acquire one, examine as many specimens as possible of this variety, and pester any willing numismatist to share their insight on this interesting marriage. Current evidence suggests this was the first draped bust dollar struck with the new heraldic eagle reverse sharing the “knob 9” obverse



of 1798 Bolender 1.<sup>1</sup> This coin shares the reverse of Bolender 4; another scarce early dollar. This article will serve to describe the known examples and commence a discussion on my observations on this early dollar marriage.

The most obvious observation on B32 is the omnipresent failure of stars 6 & 7 and L of LIBERTY on the obverse with evidence of failure present even on the highest grade examples. Corresponding weakness on the reverse is noted at UN in United. Although I consider the number of coins too few in any given grade to reliably claim a die state progression several do appear to have this area nearly obliterated. It is not possible to determine if some of this is simply wear due to the limited number of coins available for study. I have been able to examine seven coins to date.

The second often seen observation is the apparent oval appearance of these coins. This characteristic also appears on all specimens I have examined and has been described several times in reference to this marriage. At first glance one could wonder if these planchets were oval. I therefore traced an example of B32 alongside 1798 B12 and 1799 B22; all had identical

diameters. I then examined the “third side” of the coin examining a VF example and I noted that the edge varied at least 0.2mm in thickness at the obverse ten o’clock position where it appeared substantially thicker. The coin lay flat and was not bent. As the coin was rotated one could clearly see an area of relative increased thickness about the same area where stars 6 & 7 and the L LIBERTY were obliterated. I shared this with several other collectors and it appears convincingly that the obverse die (presumably hammer die) buckled into itself and the rim itself is thicker in that area. This provides an optical illusion of an elliptical coin. I encourage other collectors to examine their coins edges to try to confirm this on other specimens. I recognize this will prove difficult on holdered coins. Perhaps the edge study techniques of x-ray described recently in Penny Wise<sup>2</sup> by an observant EAC member would be helpful to study those coins which are to remain holdered. I invite other comments on this theory and hope we can reunite all the specimens at an ANA or EAC meeting one day.

I offer a few other observations on this marriage which await confirmation:

- 1) All specimens appear to have the reverse rotated clockwise.
- 2) The D in United appears to be a converted I. Engraver error?
- 3) Centering dot on the reverse eagle is not circular; what tool was used for this mark?
- 4) There are horizontal die scratches connecting T-A-T with two vertical die scratches interrupting these between A-T.
- 5) A die chip leads to a small wedge like defect on the nose.
- 6) A faint die crack leads upward from the rim right of 8 in the date and terminates above the drapery.
- 7) A second faint crack leads from the rim towards the point of the bust.

The second part of this article will strive to describe known specimens of Bolender 32. For this purpose I began with a review of the Bowers Borckardt text and cross referenced the most current JRCS early dollar survey<sup>3</sup> from this journal in December 2007. Finally, original auction catalogs were studied. I am indebted to David Perkins for his assistance with completion and confirmation of the pedigree information. Hopefully the following descriptions will help collectors track their specimens and avoid duplicate descriptions in the literature.

My research describes 11-12 current specimens with the possibility of one other at the time of this article. Bowers describes 11 auction appearances on page 273 of his encyclopedia. He muses that perhaps 10-20 exist though methodology for this number is lacking in the text. In analysis of the Bowers text three specimens need special review:

The Boyd specimen described as VF 20 Ex Worlds Greatest Collection was not a knob 9 coin and cannot be a B32; the cracks on the reverse also do not match the B32 reverse. The coin was not plated in the WGC collection.<sup>4</sup> The Spies specimen is mentioned also on page 274 of the Bowers text; this coin is nicely plated in the Spies sale (Lot 110 12/1974 Stacks) and is clearly a B6. Finally the Connecticut Historical Society Specimen graded



Fine 12 (Bowers and Merena 1983; 2047) does not clearly correspond with the subsequent specimens described and was not plated in this reference.



## KNOWN SPECIMENS OF 1798 BOLENDER 32

1. Bower-Borckardt Plate Coin (Brooks specimen): ICG 25; Current owner unknown? JRCS #1153; Last sold as Lot 4967 Luebke sale 1/2007 FUN Heritage; ex Albany collection Lot 7800 9/2002; ex Brooks Collection (B&M) 6/89; probably Lot 2103 Krueger 7/1984 ANA (not plated).
2. San Marino Collection Coin: Currently Hesselgesser collection as PCGS 61; ex Cardinal Collection(6/30/2005 ANR) as PCGS 58; ex Pre Long Beach San Marino sale (Goldberg 9/2002) as PCGS 55; ex John Haugh 8/5/98; Jim Matthews; ex Cardinal Collection Photos in article by author.
3. AU 55-58 (raw) specimen W. David Perkins Collection via Julian Leidman April 1996; supposedly from an old type set. Nice surfaces...no further pedigree information.
4. Discovery Coin/Baldenhofer Specimen: Authors collection NGC 35 ex Reiver sale Lot 23553 as NGC 35 1/2006; ex Superior Dr Davenport Lot 472 (1977); ex 1975 ANA Lot 853 (Superior) from AJ Ostheimer; ex Baldenhofer with article by Frank Stirling (page 104 Reiver silver dollar book by W. David Perkins).<sup>5</sup>
5. Reiver duplicate: AG 3 (NGC) JRCS member 1054; ex Reiver Lot 23554; ex Julian Leidman 10/89; ex Woody Blevins sale Lot 3698 Superior 6/88.
6. Yolanda Gross specimen: XF 40 with planchet mark in hair. JRCS member; ex Kagin ANA convention sale 1983 Lot 2671.
7. MacFarland specimen: Fine 15 with "hammer and sickle" scratch by star 8/9. Probably JRCS member 951; ex Willasch Lot 515 Superior 5/90; ex Blevins Lot 3697 where it was "described as high rarity 5!" 6/88; ex MacFarland Bowers and Ruddy Lot 1555 1981.
8. XF 40 coin; EF 45 or better detail with nice luster, adjustment marks and a few light scratches. Current JRCS member; ex W. David Perkins; bought privately from a want list!; sold to Jim Matthews privately; ex Bowers and Merena???
9. VF 20(PCGS Green label): ? Listed in JRJ survey; ex Bill Luebke via E-bay 2/2006; ex Lot 6487 Heritage NY ANA (7/97).
10. Miller Coin: ICG 30; ex John Haugh 1998 possibly the same as specimen 11.
11. EF 40 Coin: EF 40 with rim disturbances. Ex John Haugh 1998 Portland ANA was cherried at that show by an astute east coast dealer and sold to John Haugh at the show (info courtesy W. David Perkins).
12. E-bay coin: Nice VF+ detail with hole repaired by star 1. JRCS member 101; ex Ebay via author 2007. Study coin for photos in article.



The above represents the current status of the known specimens of Bolender 32 as of early 2008. Please note that the unplated Connecticut Historical Society specimen in the Bowers treatise remains unaccounted for. It may be another specimen or a duplicate coin for one of the twelve described coins. I suspect that coin #10 and #11 are the same coin but this awaits confirmation.

This variety remains an R7 at this time despite the hypothesis of up to 20 coins by Bowers and the 1988 description in the Blevins sale as high R5. It is my hope that those who read this article will examine their coins carefully and one day we can compare all the specimens. Given my observations and attempt at definitive pedigrees I expose as many questions as I try to answer and therefore invite comment on my observations and any corrections on pedigree at [cascades1787@yahoo.com](mailto:cascades1787@yahoo.com).



#### References:

- 1.) JRCS Journal, Volume 11, Issue #2, David Perkins.
- 2.) Pennywise, March 2008, Issue #245.
- 3.) JRCS Journal, Volume 18, Issue#3, David Perkins.
- 4.) Worlds Greatest Collection, F.C.C. Boyd, 1945; Lot 59.
- 5.) Reiver, Jules. Early Silver Dollars 1794-1803, Krause Publications, 1999.

#### Acknowledgements:

W. David Perkins for sharing his extensive pedigree notes and proofing this article  
Bill Luebke for entrusting me with not one, but two B32 coins to study!  
John Dannreuther and John Kraljevich for their spirited discussions and examination of the study coin.  
Rory Rea for his close up edge photograph.



# View From The Rim

Paul Kluth

## “Believe It Or Knot”

Every collector knows the excitement of finding something totally new or previously unreported. Even today, new finds are popping up more often than one would expect although not too frequently. Maybe regular “irregularity” is the more appropriate way to express what is happening with new discoveries coming out of the woodwork these days.

Strong coin markets not only tend to cause fresh material to surface after years of storage in collection, but collectors today are more eagle-eyed than ever and capable of spotting subtle differences among particular pieces.

Finding a new variety, a totally new die marriage, an unreported die stage or new off-metal for instance is always an exciting event for any specialist in any obsolete U.S. coin series.

This may be the case of the pictured Bust Dime below?



Shown is an 1829 Bust Dime (Variety 2) with a newly reported reverse die break emanating from the Eagle's beak and extending downward to and just inside the Eagle's right wing (left side of Eagle when viewing the reverse).



This is a pretty cool die break and is certainly unique as far as die breaks go in the Bust series. Recently dubbed the “dragon tongue”, this unusual die break to say the least makes the Eagle look like it is spitting fire (a real “flame thrower” you might say). Maybe the Eagle appears to have the tongue of some nasty snake.

Has anybody seen another coin with this form of die fracture before or maybe seen an earlier die state with only a partial die break or lighter die crack where the later stage progression is seen? Could this reverse die break be the first one reported and as such fairly rare?

## Believe It or Knot?

\*

\*

\*

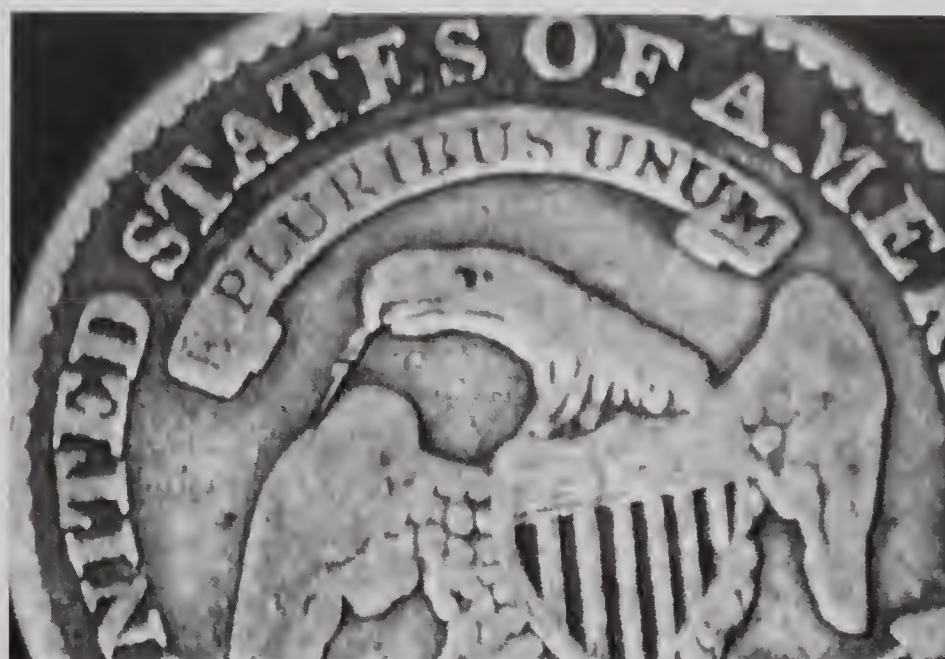
\*

\*

Well, probably Knot. Believe it or knot in this strange instance, the die break is quite deceptive. Take a closer look... There is actually a gouge or deep cut/scrape on the bottom side of the apparent break that pushes the planchet metal up in such a way as to make there appear to be a shattered die at this location on the reverse. And because the coin is worn (coin likely grades in the VG range), the wear tends to cover up the scrape in the planchet metal so that to the untrained eye, what you think you see is a monumental die break (monumental at least for a small Bust coin the size of a dime).

The following images attempt to highlight the deep cut mark so you can see the difference. By looking at the coin straight on as you might view the coin in an album or a coin holder in a dealer's case, you may not pick up that there is really a deep and worn gouge. [By the way, dealers at coin shows who typically have well lit tables are greatly appreciated.]





Several experts have expressed the opinion that another tell tale sign that this is not a true die break is that the apparent break extends into the Eagle's wing. If it stopped at the edge of the wing, there is a better chance it might be a genuine break (though not necessarily). Other opinions expressed believe a genuine die break can in fact cross into the wing in this particular case. Such an example might be a shattered die stage where a die break goes across the entire Eagle from one rim to the opposite rim. Interesting!

Suppose the lesson here (and we as collectors have all learned lessons the hard way before) is to know your diagnostic characteristics that apply to various Bust coins or any other series, denomination for that fact. Varieties, errors and the various die states all have certain visual diagnostics that when added up can help to verify a coin's authenticity.

JRCS members who are particularly knowledgeable in their specialty areas are a wealth of good information and their experience can be extremely helpful in avoiding an expensive mistake. As they say, "Knowledge is King". Getting a second opinion regarding the genuineness of a strange anomaly or unusual coin is always a wise thing to do.

In the case of this particular Bust Dime, the investment was not too large by any means and the relatively small price paid for this coin was well worth the knowledge that can be gained by sharing the deception (whether intentional or not) with others to prevent another collector from making a similar mistake.

It is the opinion of this writer that this cut mark was not made with the intention of defrauding anyone. The damage probably occurred sometime during the past 175 years and this coin has probably been a part of many collections over the years. Later on, someone happened to notice the mark and thought it was a die break of some sort. The coin was ultimately sold and described as having a reverse die break maybe even a few times in recent years.

UNLESS of course another collector has found a similar die break on another 1829 Variety 2? But chances are no one will.

Oh and double darn-knot, this 1829 doesn't have the "curl base" 2 in the date...





# An Extremely Late Die State, Triple CUD, 1830 JR-3

## Dime

**Louis Scuderi**

In a recent article by Jim Matthews (2005) dealing with CUDs on capped bust dimes over 20 CUDs from 1796 to 1835 were noted. A number of these CUDs occur on 1830 dimes, including the 1830 JR-1 reverse CUD over UNI and 1830 JR-4 obverse with a dentil CUD over the cap and reverse CUD over the M in AMERICA. The 1830 JR-5 shares the same 1830 Obverse as the JR-4 (Obverse 2) and has the same obverse dentil CUD. Two additional internal CUD's are listed in Early United States Dimes (Davis et al., 1984). The first is on the JR-6 with a small CUD from the knob to the bottom of the 3 on the obverse, and the second is on the 1830 JR-8, which uses the same obverse (Obverse 3) as JR-6.

The 1830 JR-3 is described in EUSD as having a number of obverse and reverse cracks, however none of these is listed as forming a CUD. Late die state examples of JR-3 are known for the large and somewhat irregular crack that runs from the rim through Star 7

through the cap and then back out to the rim near Star 8 (*Figure 1*). On most late die state specimens this provides for an interesting study of die deterioration with the progressive widening of this crack as the die deteriorates. In reality this crack in its latest die state appears to be an internal CUD with a small piece of the die having fallen out between Star 7 and the cap.



*Figure 1. Very late die state 1830 JR-3 dime with obverse CUD over S8 and S9.*

In 1989 I found an extremely late die state of the JR-3 with this crack in an advanced state like several others that I had already acquired (Figure 1). However, this one was different than the others in that the die crack from the rim to Star 8 to Star 9 and back to the rim above the upper point of star 10 was now a retained CUD complete with offsets where the CUD crossed the dentils.

Even more surprising was the reverse (Figure 2). In this very late die state specimen the crack from the rim through the tops of NITE and back to the rim has developed into a CUD. In addition I could see under high magnification that the crack from the rim and across the tops of IC had expanded significantly. Unfortunately there was too much wear on this portion of the coin to confirm that this crack had also developed into a CUD.

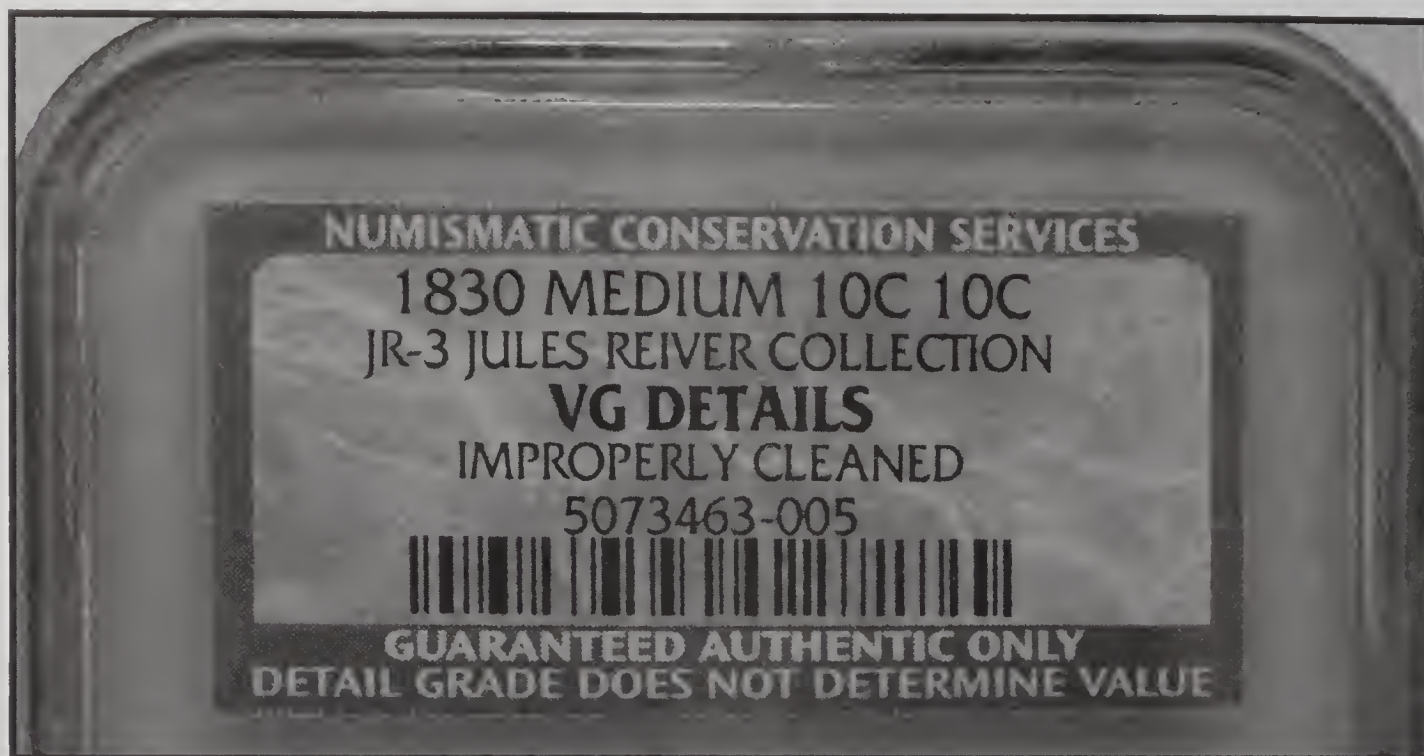


*Figure 2. Very late die state 1830 JR-3 dime with reverse CUD over NITE and heavy die crack between tops of IC.*

For over 16 years I searched for another example. I was able to find four coins with the obverse CUD at least partially visible but all of the coins were too worn to identify any reverse die defects. Finally in late 2005 I spotted an example that confirmed my initial suspicions about the possible third CUD. This coin was Lot 29489 in Heritage Auction 391 – otherwise known as Part 2 of the Jules Reiver collection! Apparently Jules had found an example with all three CUDs but the coin had been cleaned and found its way into the secondary sale in a Numismatic Conservation Services holder labeled JR-3, VG



DETAILS, IMPROPERLY CLEANED (*Figure 3*). The images were of somewhat low contrast and unless you specifically knew what to look for you could have easily missed the CUDS.



*Figure 3. Reiver holder for triple CUD 1830 JR-3.*

Knowing that every dime collector that I knew was looking for dimes with CUDS I fully expected that the coin would be bid beyond what I was willing to pay. Just prior to the January 30th 2006 closing date I placed a bid, fully expecting to be badly outbid. To my surprise there were only five bids besides my own and apparently no one recognized the importance of this die state since it sold for less than half of my very conservative bid.

As can be seen in figure 4 the reverse of the Reiver coin has a CUD over NITE as I found in my first coin 16 years earlier, and a second CUD running from the rim over R through the tops of I and C and then back to the rim half way between C and A. This section of the die, 180 degrees opposed to the first reverse CUD, is depressed and shows offsets where the CUD meets the rim. The obverse star 8 to star 9 CUD is nearly identical to the coin that I found in 1989 but because of cleaning and low contrast, and the fact that it remains in the Reiver holder, it is nearly impossible to photograph clearly.



The apparent weakness of strike on the reverses of these late die state coins is probably related to the significant and multiple failures of both dies. This may explain why this die state has remained unreported for so long. I have continued looking for a higher-grade example but have failed to find anything better than an AG specimen that shows the obverse star 8 to star 9 CUD and the IC depressed CUD on the reverse. In this latest

*Figure 4. Reverse of the late die state Reiver JR-3 showing both reverse CUDS.*

example the area around NITE is too worn to discern a CUD, but based on my original coin and the Reiver coin I'm certain that it is there.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Davis, David J., Logan, Russell J., Lovejoy, Allen F., McCloskey, John W., Subjack, William J., Early United States Dimes 1796-1837, John Reich Collectors Society, Ypsilanti, MI, 1984.

Jim Matthews. Retained and Full Cuds on Dimes From 1796 to 1837. John Reich Journal 49, Vol. 16(3), p. 31-35. June 2005.





# An Elliptical Bust Quarter

Henry R. Hilgard

How does a bust quarter end up being both light in weight and elliptical in shape? That question emerged at the Long Beach Show in September 2007 when an unusual 1819 B-1 quarter became the topic of discussion.



*Figure 1. Obverse and Reverse of 1819 Elliptical Quarter*

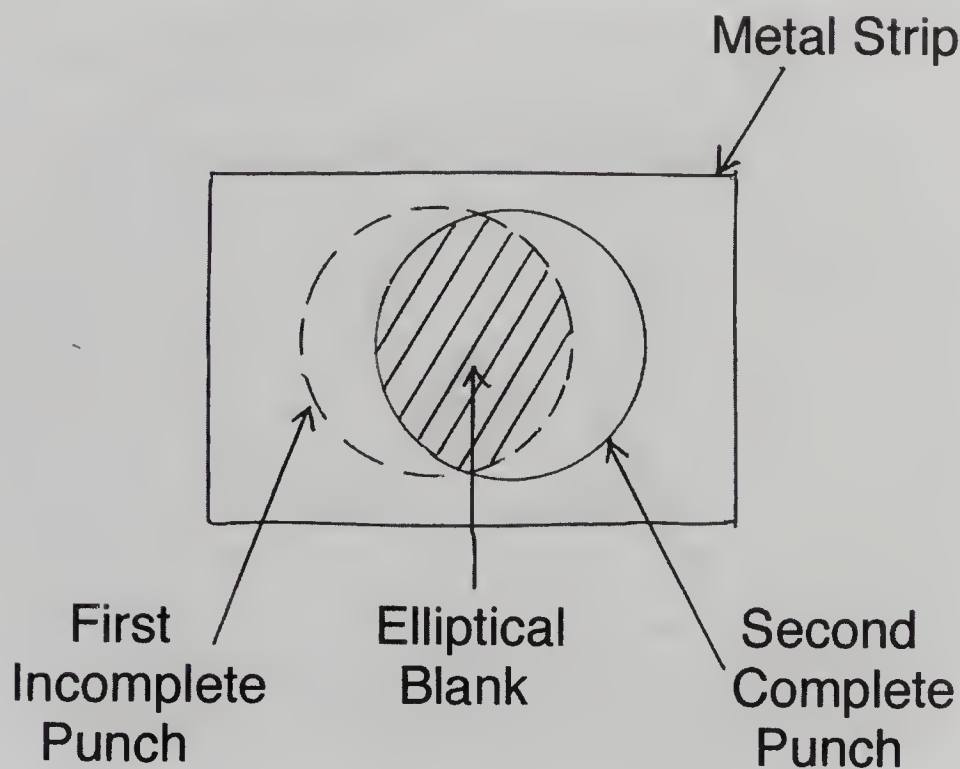
*\*The expected weight is approximate because of normal variation and wear.*

This quarter (*Figure 1*) has been slabbed by both ANACS and NGC. ANACS used the words undersized planchet to describe it, and the NGC notation was elliptical planchet - 6.2 grams. ANACS graded the coin EF 40, and NGC called it XF 45. The weight of the coin at 6.2 grams is 8% lower than the expected 6.74 grams\*. Its shape is also approximately elliptical, it being 25.9 mm in diameter from star 4 to star 12, and 26.6 mm across from the top of the cap to the space just before star 1. On its edge, there is weak reeding present at 12:00 (*Figure 2*), and again at 7:00, but otherwise no reeding at all. The spacing between the reeds is the same as that of a normal 1819 B-1 quarter (kindly supplied for comparison by Jim Ross) and its edge shows no evidence of having been tampered with.

An elliptical planchet usually results from an error in punching out the coin blank<sup>1</sup>. First, a blank is incompletely punched so that it does not quite fall out of the metal strip. Then, when a successful repunching occurs, the successful punch does not precisely overlap the incomplete punch, so that an elliptical, football-shaped, blank falls out (*Figure 3*).



*Figure 2. Edge Reeding of 1819 Quarter*



*Figure 3. Origin of Elliptical Clipped Planchet*

Another possibility is that a smaller, but normally shaped, planchet was originally punched out. David McCarthy suggested that a \$5 gold piece punch might have been mistaken for a quarter punch. This is plausible because \$5 gold pieces were 25 mm diameter whereas the quarters were only 2 mm larger at 27 mm. In this case the final product would have become elliptical because of metal flow during striking. Examples of approximately elliptical shapes produced this way are commonly seen on Washington quarters that are struck on round cent planchets, where striking causes the metal to flow outward from the portions of Washington's portrait that are nearest to the edge, resulting in elongation of the final product from above Washington's head to below his chest (*Figure 4*). A similar pattern of metal flow may have occurred during the striking of this 1819 quarter, in which the metal would have been pushed outward into the collar to create reeding just above Miss Liberty's head (at 12:00) and just beneath her bust (at 7:00). There is a problem with this smaller punch explanation, however: using a \$5 punch by mistake would be expected to result in a quarter blank weighing 14% less than normal, not



the observed 8% less, assuming that the punches had the same ratio of diameters as the final coins.

Regardless of the process by which this unusual coin came into existence, it is nonetheless the first U.S. bust silver coin known to me that displays these characteristics.



*Figure 4. Elliptical shape of a Washington Quarter struck on a Cent Planchet*

**Reference:**

1. Margolis, A. and Weinberg, F., *The Error Coin Encyclopedia*, Third Edition, 2000, pp.131-134.



# Early Dollar Specialist K.P. Austin of Salisbury, Maryland

W. David Perkins

At the 2008 Baltimore ANA Convention, I learned from Salisbury, Maryland coin dealer Gus Tiso that K. P. Austin had passed away at age 96.

I never had the pleasure of meeting K.P. in person, but corresponded with him by mail and phone over the years. It took me years to track him down and first connect. I appreciate Julian Leidman's help with this.

SILVER DOLLARS

1794

10/54

Made

XP

1795

B-1	2/52	Bol. 183	Sale Lot# 3	XF	plus AU to U
B-2	2/52	Bol. 183	" " 4	XF	
B-3	2/52	Bol. 183	" " 5	VF	
B-4	2/52	Bol. 183	" " 6	XF	planchet a little
B-5	4/53	Bol. 184	" " 29+	UNC	
B-5a	3/52	Laird	" " "	VF	
B-6	2/52	Bol. 183	" " 8	XF	
B-7	11/56	H. Roth (Clark)	" " "	AU	
B-8	2/52	Bol. 183	Sale " 9	VF	
B-9	"	"	" " 10	XF	
B-9a	10/56	Fed. Coin	" " "	XF	
B-10	2/52	Bol. 183	" " 12	F	
B-11	"	"	" " 13	VF	
B-12	"	"	" " 14	XF	
B-12a	"	"	" " 15	F	
B-13	"	"	" " 16	VF	
B-14	"	"	" " 17	UNC	
B-15	"	"	" " 18	XF - all	
B-16	"	"	" " 19	UNC	

1796

B-1	8/52	ANA	Sale " 1233	VF	
B-2	8/54	Green	" " "	XF	
B-4	10/51	Hutter	" " "	VF	
B-4a	2/55	Kelly (DeCoppet Col.	" " "	XF	
B-5a	6/52	Stacks	Sale Lot# 220	XF - A.U.	
B-6	6/57	Green	" " "	VF	green planchet 2

1797

B-1	4/52	Blanchard	" " "	XF - VF	
B-1a	2/55	Kelly (DeCoppet Col.)	" " "	VF	
B-2	8/54	Green	" " "	XF	
B-3	10/53	Green	Sale Lot# 137	UNC	

1798

B-1a	8/54	Storek (Farouk Sale '54)	" " "	XF	
B-2	4/54	Stack (D.C. Sale)	" " "	F - VF	
B-3	10/53	Schulman	Sale Lot# 274	VF	
B-4	8/52	ANA	" " 1241	XF	
B-5	2/52	Bol.	" " 42	VF	
B-6	11/52	Laird	" " "	VF	
B-7	"	"	" " "	F G-VG	
B-8a	12/53	Schulman	" " "	F	
B-9	5/57	Mason-Dixon	" " "	VF	
B-9a	10/52	Laird	" " "	F VG	
B-10	12/56	Stack	" " "	F +	
B-11b	8/56	Stack	" " "	VF +	

Partial listing of K.P. Austin's early silver dollar die variety collection 1794-1803. This copy was acquired by the author from Jacque Ostheimer and includes the entire Austin early dollar collection.

I first noted K.P. Austin's name associated with the pedigrees on quite a few early silver dollars in Superior Stamp and Coin Co., Inc's. 1975 A.N.A. Sale. I later acquired Mr. and Mrs. Ostheimer's copy of the September 1968 Lester Merkin public auction sale. The Austin name showed up again, but not in the sale catalog. This time it was on the auction settlement laid into this copy of the catalog! I figured K.P. must have had quite a collection of the early dollars by die marriage.

Along the way, in the B&M Armand Champa Numismatic Literature sale I also acquired K.P.'s copy of the February 1952 Bolender 183rd Sale, the sale of Bolender's personal reference collection of early dollars. Included with this copy was the original invoice for the auction settlement and two letters from M. H. Bolender to K.P. Jules Reiver later provided me with a listing of all of K.P.'s early



dollar collection that he had gotten from K.P., complete with purchase records (date, source and cost).

Prior to conversing with K.P., I'd twice managed to figure out what was in his collection.

It took a while, but on Thursday, September 5, 1996 I finally managed to talk with K.P. on the phone. I asked him if he still had any of his research or notes. K.P. told me "no, all my records were lost or stolen." I, of course, wondered if this was a "smoke screen," or fact. I was disappointed, of course, but told K.P. that "maybe I could help recreate his collection."

I asked about the sale of his collection. He said, "I think I sold them to Bolender; he sold to Ostheimer."

I put together a package and mailed it to K.P. I included copies of the Merkin '68 Sale, '75 ANA Sale, Jules listing of K.P.'s collection, the letters and invoice from K.P.'s copy of Bolender's 183rd Sale catalog. In other words, I recreated his collection, complete with pedigrees and cost.

I think he appreciated this.

A month or so later, I received a package from K.P. Inside were large sized photos of the 1795 Flowing Hair Dollars that K.P. had purchased out of the Bolender sale / collection! A short note from K.P. read [Sic.],

9/12/96

*Dave Perkins*

*Dear Dave:*

*Enclosed the copy of photos which came from Bol. When I  
bot the set. Hope you like them.*

*Thanks again for the copy of my records*

*Regards,  
K.P.*

As they say, "Priceless."

There's more.

In 2004 I acquired the extensive notes and correspondence of the Ostheimer's from Mrs. Ostheimer. Included was correspondence between M. H. Bolender and K. P. Austin pertaining to the acquisition of the Austin collection by Bolender and the subsequent sale of the entire collection to the Ostheimers. K.P.'s memory was correct: he sold his collection en bloc to Bolender, who sold it to the Ostheimers. The invoice matched perfectly to the listing Jules had given me over a decade earlier. I now had the Austin collection listing for a third time!

Following (in part) is his obituary (source unknown, probably a local Salisbury, Maryland newspaper):

**SALISBURY** – Kenneth Percy Austin, 96, died Wednesday, July 2, 2008, of heart failure at his home in Salisbury with his son, Mark, by his side. Kenneth was born May 5, 1912, in South China, Maine, to Quaker parents. He was raised on the large family farm with his three brothers and three sisters. He attended Erskine Academy in Windsor, Maine, and Westtown School in Westtown, Pa. He completed his forestry degree at New York State Ranger School in Syracuse, N.Y., and went to work as a forester for the Great Northern Paper Co. in northern Maine. In 1937, he married Bera Arlita Brown of High Point, N.C. He moved his family to Salisbury in 1943. During World War II he served as a conscientious objector in the Army Medical Corp. He learned to fly recreationally for more than 35 years, but gave up the charter flight business and returned to lumbering. He started the Pine Land Lumber Co. with sawmills in Princess Anne and Fruitland. Many will remember him as the man with the jewelry, the man in the hat, the man in the slow moving purple Mercedes, the man who loved to play bridge and the man who loved to bet the horses.

K.P. also collected Large Cents, Currency, Seated Dollars and especially loved 1794 Dollars (he owned multiple specimens over the years, per another phone conversation). I have a stunning Gem Proof H&K #308 Roosevelt So-Called Dollar, ex. K.P. Austin and the Ostheimers. Ironically, this So-Called Dollar alone is now worth multiples of what Austin paid for all of the 1795 Flowing Hair Dollars in the 1952 Bolender sale!

I'm sorry I never got the chance to meet K. P. Austin in person. I did have the opportunity to talk with him on the phone, and exchange a few items and letters. Jules Reiver and Mrs. Ostheimer knew him and had met him.



# M. H. BOLENDER

DEALER IN  
RARE COINS AND PAPER MONEY  
APPRAISALS—AUCTION SALES

1126 BENSON BLVD.  
FREEPORT, ILLINOIS

Sold to

*K.P. Austin*  
*Salisbury*  
*Md.*

FEB 23 1952

3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11

\$ 70—  
85—  
70—  
70—  
44—  
60—  
165—  
90—  
70 50

Partial copy of Austin's invoice from Bolender's 183rd Sale, this one with some of the 1795 Flowing Hair Dollars that Austin purchased in this sale, including the Extremely Rare 1795 B-8 Dollar at \$165.00 (before the 5% buyer's fee). Austin's 183rd Sale catalog and invoice was acquired by the author in the B&M Armand Champa literature sale.

Obverse photo of the 1795 B-8 Dollar, ex. Bolender-Austin Ostheimer, still a solid Rarity-7 today. This specimen is the finest known for the die marriage and has an exceptional pedigree. Austin purchased this specimen in Bolender's 183rd Sale in February 1952.



Dave Perkins

Dear Dave:

Enclosed  
The copy of photos  
which came from  
Bol. when I bot  
The set. Hope  
you like them.

Thanks again  
for the copy of  
my records.  
Regards  
K.P.

Copy of note and photo from the set of photos Bolender gave to K.P. Austin after K.P. purchased the Flowing Hair Dollars from Bolender's 183rd Sale. This photo is the 1795 B-16 Dollar, an R-8 and the finest of three specimens known today! The set of photos is now in the author's collection. Original photo is 5X7, with the obverse and reverse of the coin illustrated at 2X normal size.



(1-10-16)





# The Bayside Collection of 1796-1797 Draped Bust Half Dollar Varieties

**Jon P. Amato, Ph.D.**

Another numismatic milestone was reached on July 31, 2008 when the four varieties of 1796-1797 Draped Bust Small Eagle half dollars from the Bayside New York Collection crossed the auction block in Heritage Auction Galleries' Platinum Night sale. This is only the fifth time in U.S. numismatic history that all four varieties from one collection are known to have been consigned to public auction. The other four collections holding all four die pairs are those of:

- A.C. Gies (Stack's, October 1940);
- Dennis Heller (New England Rare coin Auctions, January 1982);
- James Brilliant (Bowers and Merena, January 1992); and
- Jules Reiver (Heritage, January 2006).

## Description of the Bayside 1796-1797 Half Dollar Varieties



*Fig. 1. 1796 15 Stars, Overton-101, R.5 AU58 PCGS*

The diagnostic crack from the rim at 5:00 to Liberty's bust is relatively light on the Bayside specimen, and exhibits just a faint connection to star 15. Moreover, the semicircular crack that is usually visible on Liberty's neck above the shoulder on high-end VF and better coins is absent on this piece, indicating that it is from an earlier die state.

Cobalt-blue patina concentrates at the margins, while whispers of the same color palette join with lavender and orange in the central areas. A well executed strike delivers sharp definition to the design elements, including excellent detail in Liberty's facial features, hair strands, ribbon, and drapery. The eagle's wing and tail plumage is virtually complete, while the torso, neck, and legs reveal the typical softness. Both sides exhibit complete dentilation, though it is

stronger on the reverse. Semireflective surfaces are completely devoid of adjustment marks, and reveal just a handful of minuscule contacts on Liberty's chest. Two rather spectacular blanchet defects on the lower reverse serve to identify this marvelous coin.

Ex: Anderson Dupont Collection, Part II (Stack's, 11/1954), lot 2031; R.L. Miles Collection, Part II (Stack's, 4/1969), lot 1205; Dr. E. Yale Clarke Collection (Stack's, 10/1975), lot 182; Bowers and Ruddy Rare Coin Review, No. 26, Summer 1976; Bayside Collection (Heritage, 7/2008), lot 1668, \$207,000, including buyer's premium.



*Fig. 2. 1796 16 Stars, Overton-102, High R.5 VF30 PCGS*

The Bayside Collection 1796 16 Stars half dollar lacks the usually seen crack from the milling between the date and star 1 that travels through the first four stars to the rim at 8:00. This indicates it was struck from a very early state of the obverse die. The reverse displays a faint crack from the edge through O in OF to the leaf point below F, a precursor to the myriad cracks that eventually develop when this reverse is paired with the 1797 obverse.

Both sides display bright silver-gray surfaces with occasional blushes of slightly deeper gray and faint sky-blue. Traces of luster reside in some of the recessed areas, and the design elements reveal sharp definition for the assigned grade. Strong dentilation shows on both obverse and reverse, each of which is devoid of adjustment marks. A few inoffensive contact marks consistent with light to moderate circulation are visible; one between Liberty's forehead and star 10, and one to the left of the U in UNITED might aid future catalogers and researchers in identifying the coin. Encapsulated in a green-label holder.

Ex: Teletrade Auction, early 1990's (per Bayside consignor); Bayside Collection (Heritage, 7/2008), lot 1669, \$83,375, including buyer's premium.





*Fig. 3. 1797, Overton-101a, High R.4 VF30 NGC*

The Bayside 1797 O-101a specimen displays the faint diagnostic die crack from the rim through star 2 to Liberty's curl, and the reverse exhibits some of the incipient cracks that eventually led to the shattering of the reverse die. There is a relatively heavy crack from the edge through the O in OF to the leaf point below F. Additionally, a thin crack from the rim at about 10:00 extends to the top of the leaf that is positioned to the lower right of the D in UNITED. Another light crack travels from the edge through the first T in STATES to the stem of the left topmost berry. No other reverse cracks are visible on this particular coin, as it appears not to be the terminal die state of O-101a. Moreover, any other cracks that may have formed were likely very thin, and subsequently wore away.

Light to medium gray patination dominates, exhibiting subtle golden undertones. Liberty's hair is nicely delineated, as is a good portion of the drapery. The reverse design elements are also quite sharp, save for the typical softness on the eagle's breast, neck, and legs. Relatively strong dentilation is apparent, and no adjustment marks are evident. The reverse is remarkably clean, while the obverse reveals a few light marks, including a hairline scratch across the neckline that helps to pedigree the coin.

Ex: Raymond L Tollett Estate (Stack's, 4/1971), lot 53; Stack's (10/1978), lot 136; The Dennis Heller Collection (New England Rare Coin Auctions, 1/1982), lot 619; Jonathan Kern (July 1982); Bayside Collection (Heritage, 7/2008), lot 1670, \$69,000, including buyer's premium.



*Fig. 4. 1797, Overton-102, Low R.6 VF35 PCGS*

As expected, the die crack from the edge through star 2 to Liberty's curl is much heavier on this variety than on the 1797 O-101a. Also, the new reverse used for the O-102 is free of cracks, and differs slightly from the old one in its wreath alignment vis-a vis the peripheral lettering.

A delicate mix of violet-gray, sky-blue, yellow-green, and purple toning adorns both sides. Despite high-point wear, the design elements retain strong detail, especially in Liberty's hair, drapery and facial features, and on the eagle's wing and tail feathers. Indeed, the only softness is noted in the stars along the right border, and on the eagle's breast, legs, and neck, areas that are always weakly struck on this variety. The dentilation is bold, except again for that along the right obverse border. Adjustment marks are completely absent, and two small marks to the upper right of Liberty's shoulder are mentioned only because they might be useful in identifying the coin for pedigree purposes.

Ex: Bayside Collection (Heritage, 7/2008), lot 1671, \$97,750, including buyer's premium.

## Conclusion

The assemblage of all four 1796-1797 Draped Bust Small Eagle half dollar varieties in a single collection is a significant accomplishment, one of which the respective consignors can be rightfully proud. Several collectors have obtained two varieties of this rare type coin, and a precious few have actually managed to acquire three of the four die marriages. The fact remains, however, that even one example of this elusive piece of Americana remains beyond the reach of most collectors, meaning that many, if not most type collections will lack this key coin.

The foregoing raises some intriguing questions. What other numismatists include all four 1796-1797 half dollar varieties in their collections? Further, if such collections exist, what are the chances that all four coins might be consigned to the same auction sale, establishing yet another numismatic milestone?

Biography: Dr. Jon Amato is a coin cataloger and numismatic researcher for Heritage Auction Galleries, specializing in the 1796-1797 Draped Bust Small Eagle half dollar series, on which he has published several articles.





# The Lost Die

Steve Tompkins

One of the most intriguing and much sought after die combinations are the ones found with the reverse denominational error showing a 25 punched over 50. These examples are found in the Early Bust Quarter series and are on two different die marriages six years apart, which share this unique reverse die. They are the 1822 Browning-2 and 1828 Browning-3 die marriages. The 1822 B-2, which is a very rare and much coveted die marriage, commands a healthy price premium over the more common 1822 B-1. The 1828 B-3 die marriage while not as rare, is still considered scarce and trades at a higher level than the other 1828's. Interestingly enough, in the early days of collecting, most collectors would choose to pass over these diverse varieties, preferring instead to find a coin with a "perfect" obverse and reverse.

Walter Breen mentions in his 1992 update of Browning's **Early Quarter Dollars of the United States**, that this die was made in 1822 and *"...was laid aside in horror, becoming one of Scot's closet skeletons..."* (in reference to the then current mint engraver Robert Scot). In his **Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins** published in 1988, Breen stated this reverse die *"...was briefly resurrected in 1828, when the new Mint Engraver William Kneass could blame it on his late predecessor, and excuse its exhumation on grounds of economy."* As far as my research has found his slanderous comments against Scot were based solely on his opinion and not on any known facts, as are many of Breen's comments, conjectures and outright fables.

It is my contention that **this reverse die was engraved in 1818 not in 1822!** It would be four years after it's original creation before it would have its first opportunity to become one of our most fascinating early federal coinage anomalies.

To determine when this 1822 B-2 / 1828 B-3 reverse die was originally engraved, one can look at many different aspects and telltale signs found on the die itself and therefore the coins struck from it.

First, when working dies are prepared, certain devices are first transferred from a master die hub or punch. For the reverse in the large Capped Bust Quarter series, these devices consist of the central eagle motif with a blank shield and the ribbon above containing the motto E Pluribus Unum. On many die marriages of this type there is a die defect or damage visible on the underside of the ribbon just under the S in Pluribus. (See fig. 1)

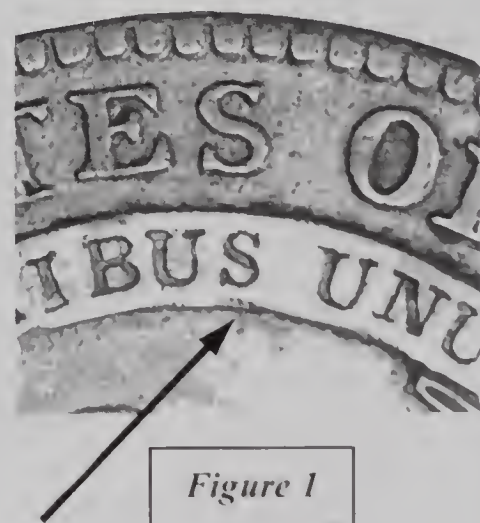


Figure 1

**TABLE 1**

DATE	DIE MARRIAGE	REV DENTIL COUNT	RIBBON DEFECT	2 TYPE IN DENOMINATION	5 TYPE IN DENOMINATION	MIDDLE TALON BROKEN AT ARROWSHAFT
1815	B-1	101		1	1	
1818	B-1	85	X	1	1	
	B-2	123		2	2	
	B-3	123		2	2	
	B-4	127	X	2	2	
	B-5	127	X	2	2	
	B-6	118	X	2	2	
	B-7	118	X	2	2	
	B-8	116		2	2	
	B-9	118	X	2	2	
	B-10	118	X	2	2	
1819	B-1	120	X	3	3	
	B-2	122	X	3	3	
	B-3	124	X	2	2	
	B-4	124	X	2	2	
1820	B-1	122	X	3	3	X
	B-2	121	X	3	3	X
	B-3	121	X	3	3	
	B-4	123	X	3	3	X
	B-5	121	X	3	3	X
1821	B-1	123	X	3	3	X
	B-2	122	X	3	3	X
	B-3	123	X	3	3	X
	B-4	121	X	3	3	X
	B-5	123	X	3	3	X
	B-6	119	X	3	3	
1822	B-1	123	X	3	3	X
	B-2	115		2	2	
1823	B-1	124	X	3	3	X
1824	B-1	124	X	3	3	X
1825	B-1	124	X	3	3	X
	B-2	122	X	3	3	X
	B-3	126	X	3	3	X
1827	B-1	123	X	4	3	X
	B-2	122	X	3	3	
1828	B-1	123	X	4	3	X
	B-2	124	X	3	3	X
	B-3	115		2	2	
	B-4	122	X	4	3	X



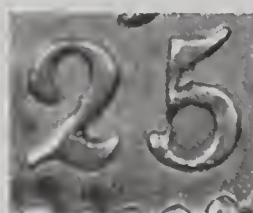
This defect is *not* present on the 1815 reverse or two of the 1818 reverses, but is present on all other reverses through 1828, *except* for 1822 B-2 and 1828 B-3, which share the common blundered reverse. It appears that the defect or damage had occurred early in 1818 on either the master hub or the working hub and was not just part of the individual working dies due to its appearance on many different reverse dies. (See table 1)

Secondly, look at the shape of the over punched 2 in the denomination shown in **figure 2**. This curl base style punch (*Type 2*) that was repunched over the erroneously punched 5, was the same one used in all of the 1818 die marriages and in the 1819 B-3 and B-4 marriages. (See table 1 for a listing of these marriages). At first glance, the style of the 2 looks more like the flat-based 2 used after 1819 (*Type 3*) due to the upward serif off the lower right side. But when put under close scrutiny one can see that this serif is from the previously punched 5, with the outer curve of the 5 lining up with the end of the base of the 2 not from the 2 punch (See fig. 2)



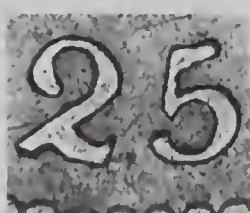
Figure 2

Third, the shape of the repunched 5 is more consistent with the ones used in 1818 and 1819 (*Type 2* - again, See table 1), however it was strengthened and made heavier with a



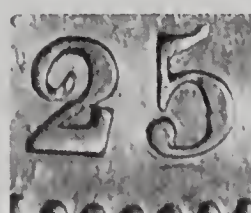
**Type 1**  
Plain Top  
Curl Base 2

Large  
Curved Top  
Plain Knob 5



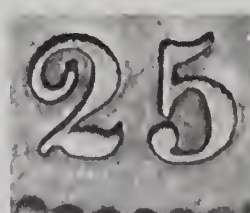
**Type 2**  
Plain Top  
Curl Base 2

Small  
Straight Top  
Plain Knob 5



**Type 3**  
Fancy Top  
Flat Base 2

**Type 3**  
Curved Top  
Ball Knob 5



**Type 4**  
Fancy Top  
Curl Base 2

**Type 3**  
Curved Top  
Ball Knob 5

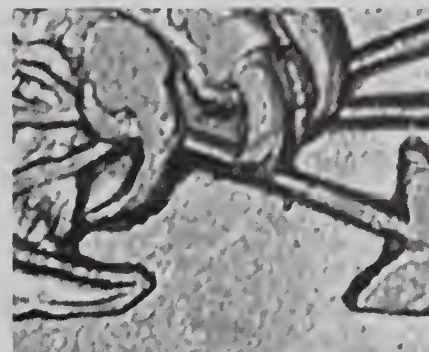
graver, possibly to cover up more of the under digit. If the die had been “laid aside in horror” as per Breen, I doubt it would have been resurrected in 1822 let alone repunched, in fact double repunched at the 5, with the correct denomination as it surely was in 1818 not 1822!

Fourth, if one counts the number of dentils on this die and compares it to all of the reverse dies from 1815-1828, you will find that the total for the 1822 B-2 and 1828 B-3 is 115, which is more consistent with a majority of the dies of 1818 rather than any of the later years. (See table 1)

And Finally, when looking at the eagle's middle left talon (the reader's right), one finds that the earlier dies have the talon extending below the lower arrow shaft, as shown in *figure 3*, and on the later dies it is broken and ends at the shaft, shown in *figure 4*. The die marriages showing these differences are compiled in table 1. Remembering that the eagle motif was part of the master hub or punch, this claw section evidently was broken off at some point on the master hub and was then transferred to all of the subsequent working dies for the

rest of the series. We find that the blundered die has the characteristics of the earlier dies with a complete claw, not the later ones showing a broken one. All of these clues combine to show us that the die was indeed prepared in 1818 not 1822.

*Figure 3*



*Figure 4*

## CONCLUSIONS

Through various observations of the many different devices found on coin dies one can come to some conclusions as to the order of manufacture or engraving of dies, one can sometimes only guess at a true striking sequence. If we take the premise that the reverse dies were continuously used until damaged or there was a design change, then the new reverses were engraved as needed and not necessarily at the beginning of every year. Regardless of when they were engraved, they could be used in multiple years as long as they were serviceable. Such natural occurrences are shown repeatedly in the large Capped Bust Quarter series, especially in 1820-21, where the reverse dies were used with multiple die marriages across different years.

With this in mind, it isn't hard to imagine the sequence of events that may have taken place in late 1817 or early 1818. When this particular reverse die was engraved and all of the devices were added to the working die, the denomination was accidentally punched with the numerals for a half dollar and not the quarter dollar! After effacing the die to try and remove the error as much as possible, it was repunched with the correct numerals. Then, seeing that they had punched the 5 numeral too low, they tried to grind this out and repunched it once again. (The lapping or grinding off of the mis-punched 5 that was too low also affected the dentils, as they are much shorter, flatter, and wider than the surrounding dentils due to this process). The result of this was a die showing an absolute mess at the denomination of 25 over 5 over 50!



Keep in mind that due to the numeral punches used, this attempt to correct the error had to have been accomplished in 1818, as different style numeral punches were employed before 1822. After all of this corrective work, the still unused blundered die was put away at the time in favor of other dies. It was only pressed into service in 1822, when Robert Scot was nearing the end of his life and it took more effort to prepare dies, or due to his inability to create them as fast as the production needs would dictate. My guess is, and it's only a guess, that late in the production run of 1822 another die was needed and the only completed one was this blundered die. So for expediency, it was used to complete the 1822 production run. Possibly this was the group struck for delivery on 12/20/1822 (Warrant #905), a total of 8,572 coins. This total of struck coins would account nicely for the scarcity of the 1822 B-2 die marriage.

Since it was only used for a limited time, the blundered reverse die was still in good serviceable condition when the run of 1822 bust quarters was finished and it was again put back into the coiners vault. It would be another 6 years before it was once again pressed into service at the end of the 1828 production run to produce the scarce 1828 B-3 die marriage. Again, it would survive the striking of this die marriage as currently there are no known 1828 B-3 coins showing any reverse die cracks, just a small amount of rust damage due to improper storage of the die. One can only wonder if the coinage redesign of 1831 hadn't taken place, if this prolific and still usable die would again have had it's day!

How is it possible for a die to be put away and forgotten for four years, that was prepared early in the 1818 production run (when more reverse dies were needed and produced), after taking countless man-hours to create and great effort to correct?

Then, in 1822, after being pulled out of obscurity and put into brief production, it was once again retired and forgotten for another 6 years! Perhaps the only way we will ever know for sure what took place will be when someone invents a time machine so that we can go back and see for ourselves how this became... **The Lost Die!**



**THE LOST DIE**



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| c ____ Capped Bust Half Dimes           | j ____ Draped Bust Half Dollars       |
| d ____ Draped Bust Small Eagle Dimes    | k ____ Capped Bust Half Dollars       |
| e ____ Draped Bust Heraldic Eagle Dimes | l ____ Flowing Hair Bust Dollars      |
| f ____ Capped Bust Dimes                | m ____ Draped Bust Dollars            |
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